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News - January 6, 2005

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Accused arsonist found in N.C.

By **SCOTT BROOKS**

Union Leader Correspondent

Accused arsonist found in N.C. By **SCOTT BROOKS** Union Leader Correspondent **NASHUA** — A Christmas card helped federal authorities track down a city man wanted for allegedly setting fire to his foreclosed condominium unit just before it went up for auction.

The U.S. Marshals Service on Tuesday arrested Edmund Grossman, 54, in Ocean Isle Beach, N.C., where he was staying with relatives, authorities said. Deputy U.S. Marshal Jeffrey White said Nashua police found the relatives' address on the envelope to a Christmas card that was mixed in with Grossman's recent mail.

"It seemed like he had no relatives or friends up this way, so it was logical that he went down there," White said.

Grossman is accused of using an accelerant to torch his recently foreclosed residence at 41 Lochmere Lane on the afternoon of Dec. 28. Three people were outside waiting to bid on the condominium when Grossman lit fires in two separate rooms and walked out, police said.

Authorities say Grossman tossed a key at one of the bidders and said, "It's all yours," before getting in his car and driving off. The bidders entered the condo to look around and noticed the smoke, police said.

Grossman has been unemployed for more than a year, said Sgt. Andrew Lavoie of the Nashua police. He lived alone in the condominium, Lavoie said.

Grossman is charged with arson, a class A felony punishable by up to 7½ to 15 years in prison. He was being held yesterday at the New Hanover County Jail in Castle Hayne, N.C., pending extradition to New Hampshire, police said.

Several neighbors were home at the time of the fire, which caused extensive interior damage, Sgt. Thomas MacLeod said.

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"Thank goodness fire was detected right away," he said. "The fire department was summoned quickly. They were able to extinguish it before any serious damage occurred. But these are attached condo units up there where this happened, so it could have been very serious."

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